because of environmentalist concern, because of limitations on the U.S. going out and leasing larger tracts of regions to be explored, particularly offshore. We lease them a small tract instead of a large tract. And so if a company goes out and leases a tract for oil exploration, and they are looking at their competition that has surrounded them with their leases, and they all speculate and get a little grid here and a little grid there, if you are sitting there and you have got a grid that is maybe, say, 5 miles by 5 miles, and I am just pulling a number out here, and your neighbors are all around you like a checkerboard, if you drill down and you find a massive supply of oil, the people that are your neighbors are going to capitalize on that without the risk that you have taken to do the wildcat exploration in that area. They will realize, well, there is an oil find in that section. And they will set down around you and drill the oil, and they will be able to take advantage of the things that you have learned by taking the risk as a single oil company.

So the incentive to put millions and billions of dollars into oil exploration is diminished significantly because the opportunity to capitalize a good find has been diminished because of us leasing smaller tracts of land. Not so in a lot of other parts of the world where there are large areas that are leased out to large oil companies, and they can go in there and drill and come up with a find, and that returns then for them because they can continue to develop an entire field of oil.

Australia, for example. I happen to know of some drilling that goes on down there in the Bass Straits between Tasmania and Australia and high currents there and thousand feet deep water, American companies down there drilling for oil, not drilling here in the United States, not drilling up in ANWR, not drilling offshore of the United States because regulations, environmental concerns, small leases, all those things have shut down the incentive for exploration in America. So our highly competent, highly technical, highly capitalized American oil companies are exploring everywhere else that they possibly can in the world, and they are contributing to our oil supply, and we should be grateful that that helps keep the price down.

Now, if there is actually price gouging, and if there is actually a level of ethical corruption, yes, we need to find that, and we need to use the law to enforce it. But if it is supply and demand and people are working above board, a windfall profits tax on our oil companies will work against the interests of the United States. It will ultimately diminish the supply of energy here in the United States and perhaps in the world, and it will ultimately raise the price of gas, not lower the price of gas.

We have got to have more energy in this country, not less energy in this country. This supply and demand reminds me of a story that Steve Simms of Idaho told years ago, I believe from this floor, perhaps, Mr. Speaker, and that is the story about, shortly after our Constitution was ratified in the post-1789 era, we didn't have crude oil at that time. We were using whale oil to light the lamps in our houses, and that is what we read by. And so Americans were sensitive to the price of whale oil. And the whalers went out from places like Nantucket and brought the whales in and extruded the oil, processed the oil off the whales, and then packaged that up and sold that around the country. You buy a little bit of whale oil, bring it in your house, fill your little container in your lamp, light the wick on your lamp and then you could read into the night. But that price of whale oil went up and up and up due to scarcity of whales.

So Congress met and they had a bill before them that suggested that they would cap the price of whale oil, Mr. Speaker. And so they had an intense debate here on the floor of Congress. And the question was, should we limit the price of whale oil so that people can continue to afford to be able to buy the whale oil to light their lamps?

What they did, Mr. Speaker, was they came to their senses. And the debate finally won out that, no, they would let the price of whale oil go up because if it went up, there would be people who would use some alternative fuels. Some of them would just simply blow out the light and go to bed and get up with the chickens in the morning. But those that had to pay more would find another alternative.

Well, so the price of whale oil continued then to go up. And not very many years after that, oil was discovered in Pennsylvania. And you can guess what happened then, Mr. Speaker, to the price of whale oil. Once oil was discovered in Pennsylvania, there was a ready supply, a tremendous amount of oil available, and far more oil than they really had a use for in those years. And so it became very cheap to light some of that Pennsylvania oil. And the price of whale oil then dropped clear out the bottom because the demand disappeared because an alternative source of energy was discovered underground in Pennsylvania.

That is how supply and demand works. And there will be other alternatives of energy that are developed if we provide for competition to help drive this and help us come up with solutions.

So I want to talk about a solution here, Mr. Speaker. And this I consider to be a picture that gets us started on the solution. I have said for a long time, Mr. Speaker, that we can talk about one component of energy or another component of energy. But there is an overall demand for energy in quadrillion BTUs, and we should measure our overall supply and consumption of energy in quadrillion BTUs. And this is kind of how it is broken up today in the U.S. domestic supply. This is the energy that we supply in America. It is not our consumption. That is a different chart. But the domestic supply. And it is broken out here, as you can see. Of all the energy that we supply, that we produce here, 10.8 percent of the BTUs are crude oil; 2.3 percent of the BTUs are natural gas. Nuclear is 8.1 percent. Our hydroelectricity is kind of frozen in place. We haven't been able to expand that in 30 or more years, but 2.7 percent. Biomass is a growing component of this, matches our hydroelectricity at 2.7 percent. The geothermal has a tremendous potential for us, and that technology is growing, I think, significantly and dramatically 3/10 of 1 percent is all. Our solar is 6/100 of a percent, a very small sliver, and that has good potential too, although it will take a while and a lot of capital.

And our wind, 1/10 of 1 percent. That also is a very much growing supply of energy. Our coal, we have been burning more and more coal, 23 percent. And this natural gas, 18.7 percent. So we have a couple of different components here, the natural gas and our crude oil again at 10.8 percent

This is, Mr. Speaker, this illustration, this is the energy pie. The size of this circle demonstrates the overall supply of BTUs, or British thermal units, of energy that we produce here in this country. Now, our alternatives become this. Energy prices are high. And of these different kinds of energy that I have talked about, the price of crude oil has gone up dramatically. The price of natural gas has gone up dramatically, both of those being, of course, the hydrocarbons.

Then the rest of these supplies, coal has gone up too. The freight on that coal has gone up dramatically in some cases. But overall, if you put more crude oil into the market, someone will decide, well, I am going to generate electricity with diesel fuel, for example. So they will decide if crude oil is cheaper, they might generate more electricity with crude oil. And this size, this percentage of the overall pie gets a little bigger. If the price of natural gas goes up, there will be people that will decide, well, I am going to go over here to this coal alternative. And I happen to know of a case where natural gas has gone so high that they are building an ethanol production plant that is going to burn coal to generate the heat, rather than use the natural gas which we have done in the rest of those that I am aware of.

Now, as we look at this, we have also the subject matter that comes up of biodiesel and also ethanol, those two big pieces. And I will talk about those a little bit too. But our overall mission, we need to understand, is this: we need more energy in this country. We need to grow the size of the energy pie. We need to make this circle a lot bigger than it is today. When we have more BTUs that are available, the supply will lower the cost of our energy. Supply and demand, whether it is whale oil versus Pennsylvania crude